

Will the broadcast flag interfere with consumers ability to make copies of DTV content for their personal use, either on personal video recorders or removable media?

The broadcast flag will interfere with my ability to make my fair use copies of DTV by requiring me to buy hardware/software specifically designed for such use. By preventing me choice in the hardware/software via a encoded flag my rights will be taken away. i.e. I own a Macintosh, so I will have to wait 1 or 2 years before I could record such content legally, as the software will only be designed for Windows systems at the start, reference launch.com and the emusic websites.

Would the digital flag interfere with consumers ability to send DTV content across networks, such as home digital networks connecting digital set top boxes, digital recorders, digital servers and digital display devices?

A digital flag would interfere with my rights to send DTV content across a home network. I look forward to a time when I can easily broadcast content to my TV from my computer, or if I choose to another computer within my home. This digital flag would limit that ability. Additionally it would prevent me from making backups of such content, when say I choose upgrade to a larger hard drive.

Would the broadcast flag requirement limit consumers ability to use their existing electronic equipment (equipment not built to look for the flag) or make it difficult to use older components with new equipment that is compliant with the broadcast flag standard?

I currently watch TV on a TV manufactured in the early 1980's and record shows using a VCR manufactured in the early 1990's. I have no plan to upgrade this system other than continued connection to a modern computer. A broadcast flag would limit my ability or make it more difficult and costly to use my existing electronic equipment.

Would a broadcast flag requirement limit the development of future equipment providing consumers with new options?

The broadcast flag would limit the development of future equipment and programming to support that equipment limiting our options. Currently much of the breaking edge development of new technology relating to digital media is done in the private or personal sector. This requirement would be a burden to small shops with only a few hardware designers or software developers, thus innovation would be stifled and costs would rise.

What will be the cost impact, if any, that a broadcast flag requirement would have on consumer electronics equipment?

The cost of implementing a broadcast flag would be prohibit expensive our solidity as a whole. We could easily see a time when a \$5 device (Say a MP3 player in 5 years - they are as low as \$30 now) is required to be sold for \$10 just so a \$5 broadcast flag chip can be built-in. Undoubtedly, the broadcast flag would be owned by a group or company and charge licensing fees further increase the costs to me the consumer.

Other Comments:

I feel that a broadcast flag system will be used to stifle competition. Right now cable companies are preventing competition via the internet by limiting the bandwidth available to cable modem customers. As bandwidth is available via other sources they will be able to control what you subscribe to by limiting distribution of legal alternate broadcasts via such broadcast flags. i.e. if a game is broadcasted on your Comcast network

then you could not watch it via Real.com software.

Additionally it will be used to stifle competition because smaller developers may not have the resources to license the broadcast flag technology, therefore they will be unable to develop better means of distribution or better service.